



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

WHEN THE "HIGHER CRITICISM" HAS DONE ITS WORK.

THE impending publication of the English "Polychrome Bible," in which such results of the "Higher Criticism" as have been accepted by the most competent scholars are to be placed within the reach of ordinary Bible-readers, and so, presumably, to affect their views of revelation, seems to render opportune an attempt to answer the question which is rising in many minds: When the "Higher Criticism" has done its work, what will remain of Christianity as a divine revelation?

To those who remember the cry of consternation and wrath that went up from Christendom after the publication of "Essays and Reviews" and of Colenso's "Pentateuch," less than forty years ago, the recent elevation of Dr. Temple, one of the much-reviled contributors to the former, to the Primacy of All England, cannot but suggest interesting reflections on the change that has taken place, in the interval, in public sentiment with regard to the Bible. And, indeed, no one who has watched the changes in recent thought can fail to see that the thinking portion of the Christian world is rapidly assuming a new attitude toward Christianity and the documents upon which its supernatural claims are based. This attitude, in contradistinction to the old churchly one of pious, unquestioning acceptance, may be called critical, and, in a good sense, sceptical, while, in contradistinction to the frivolous mockery of Voltaire and his school, it may be called earnest and reverent. It is, in a word, the scientific attitude.

To the change here indicated various sciences have contributed by showing the untenability of much that formerly, on the authority of the Bible, passed as undoubted truth. Apart from the objections which a sane philosophy raises against such unthinkable "mysteries" as creation, triune personality, and the like, astronomy has clearly demonstrated that the celestial theory of the Bible is untrue. Geology has done the

same thing for its conceptions regarding the formation of the earth; and Biology for its notions respecting the origin of the vegetable and animal (including the human) worlds. Thus, as far as regards the world of nature, the thinking men of to-day have passed from the barren theory of government by miracle, which is presupposed throughout the Bible, to the fruitful theory of government by law. It now seems almost as absurd to believe in a six-days' creation as in the geocentric theory of the universe. In the world of culture, too, the same process is going on rapidly. Historical research is showing us that the Biblical account of the origin and progress of civilization has no claim to historicity, while reflection on the conditions of ethical life is proving that the moral sanctions of the Bible, (1) an omnipotent superhuman will exacting formal atonement for all offences, (2) a promise of reward for virtue other than virtue itself, are far from the highest, belonging to an order of ideas which has long been outgrown.

All these results, and others like them, though familiar enough to students, have thus far exerted little effect upon the religious world in general. This is owing, in the main, to two causes,—indifference on its part, and the efforts of its official guides, whose mental bent and class interests lie in the direction of miraculism, and whose *ex cathedra* assertions are accepted without question. These still go on teaching the old doctrines, as if the infallibility of the Bible were undisputed, or else, forced to admit palpable errors, they help themselves out with such paltry subterfuges as that the Bible was not meant to teach physics or history, or that "we have our treasure in earthen vessels," without telling us how to distinguish the treasure from the vessels. When the inferiority of Biblical ethics is pressed upon them, they take refuge in sentimental platitudes about love to God and man,—as if feeling could ever be an ethical guide!—or else in invectives against those who dare claim that man has moral rights even against God, rights quite different from those that the clay has against the potter.

While this condition of things is still possible, despite the

revelations of the sciences of nature and culture, there has recently sprung up a science which threatens to put an end to it. This is the "Higher Criticism," which, by showing what the Bible is, and how it came to be what it is, makes its claim to infallibility ridiculous. The results of this science are now about to be thrown broadcast upon the world, and that, too, by clergymen of good standing in their respective denominations. The truth about the Bible is now about to be proclaimed, not by its enemies, but by its reverent friends. What is likely to be the result?

Under this question are virtually included the following:

- (I.) What does the "Higher Criticism" mean and attempt?
- (II.) What has it already accomplished?
- (III.) What still remains to be accomplished?
- (IV.) What will be the result for supernaturalism?
- (V.) What form will the purified faith assume?

We shall consider these in this order:

(I.) The "Higher Criticism" is simply the application of the ordinary canons and methods of literary and historical criticism to the books of the Bible, with the view of ascertaining their origin, authorship, date and mode of composition, historicity, and purpose. When this application was suggested by Dr. Jowett of Oxford, in 1860, it almost caused a panic in the religious world; but it is an encouraging indication of the progress made in liberal thought during the last thirty-six years, that among the foremost of the "higher critics" to-day are several Oxford professors, canons of the English church.

(II.) Thus far the "Higher Criticism" has directed its chief, though by no means its entire, attention to the Old Testament. In this, by means of the most careful study, carried on by many scholars working independently, it has succeeded in distinguishing the various documents employed in the compilation of the different books, in fixing approximately their various dates, and in discovering the circumstances in which, and the purposes for which, they were written. Thus, in the book of Genesis, it has been possible to distinguish seven

different elements due to different sources and epochs.* The literary contents of the Bible being thus arranged chronologically, and placed against their proper historical background, it has, for the first time, become possible to see their real meaning, and to reconstruct the true history of the Hebrew people, which is found to be very different from what is generally accepted as such, and far more living and interesting. We can now see the gradual development of Hebrew monotheistic, messianic, and hagiastic ideas, and see that they were the natural result of circumstances. We can now understand the nature and function of prophecy, as well as its relations to "the Law," to "Wisdom," and to apocalypticism. In a word, Hebrew history and thought, instead of being a series of supernatural miracles and revelations, now becomes a perfectly intelligible process of natural evolution, an interesting chapter in universal human history.

It is not possible here to give an exhaustive list of the results that flow from this scientific view of the Old Testament; but a few of the more important may be mentioned.

Thus we learn,—

(1) That Hebrew history, as generally related, is almost exactly inverted, the period of "the Law" being placed before that of "the Prophets," whereas in truth, the law is the result of the teaching of the prophets (see Cornill, "*Der israelitische Prophetismus*," pp. 3 sqq.).

(2) That the "Mosaic Law," though embodying older documents, dates, in its present form, from the close of the Captivity, and that Leviticus and the whole of the "Priestly Code" were written at that time. Deuteronomy, in the main, dates from the time of Josiah's reformation, B.C. 621. (See Wellhausen, "*Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*," and Driver, "*Crit. and Exeget. Comment. on Deuteronomy*.")

* In the "Polychrome Bible," the different documents are distinguished by different colors. An excellent, if somewhat conservative, account of the results of the "Higher Criticism" is to be found in Canon Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament." Compare Holzinger's "*Der Hexateuch*," in which the results reached by different scholars in the case of the Pentateuch and Joshua are carefully tabulated and compared.

(3) That little is known of the Hebrews previous to the days of Samuel, and that what passes for a history of earlier times is mostly tendentious legend, with a fixed formula: defection from Yahweh, oppression, repentance, restoration.

(4) That the accounts of the Creation, Fall, Flood, Call of Abraham, etc., are myths, mostly of Babylonian origin, intended to show the mission of the "chosen people" in the universal divine economy.* (See Lenormant, "Beginnings of History"; Stucken, "Astralmythen der Hebraeer, Babylonier und Ägypter"; Oort and Hooykaas, "Bible for Learners," vol. i.)

(5) That the histories of the Hebrews written under the Kings were recast during and after the Captivity, in order to give prestige and divine authority to certain theories and institutions,—to prophetism in Samuel and Kings, to priesthood in Chronicles,—and, in so far, robbed of historicity. (See Wellhausen, "Prolegomena," and Somervell, "Parallel History of the Hebrew Monarchy.")

(6) That "the Prophets," as we now possess them, are post-exilic compilations, due to the scribes, who often placed under one name writings belonging to different epochs and authors, as in the case of Isaiah. (See Cheyne, "Introduc. to the Book of Isaiah," and the "Polychrome Bible.")

(7) That the "Psalms" were composed after the exile for the services of the second temple, and embody ideas far in advance of those of David and his time. (See Cheyne, "Origin of the Psalter.")

(8) That the "Song of Songs" is a pastoral drama, written in northern Israel before the Captivity, and "Job" a poem composed about the close of the same, to encourage the faithful "Servant of Yahweh" whose representative Job is.

* Abraham, Sarah, and Noah are exilic creations (see Cheyne, "Introduc. to the Book of Isaiah," pp. 195, 273). Adam does not appear in the Old Testament after Genesis V., but is named thirteen times in the Apocrypha. Moses, as a law-giver, seems to be a creation of the age of Josiah. Historically speaking, he is named first in Jeremiah xv. 1. (See Cornill, "Der israel. Prophetismus," p. 17, Sayce, "Lectt. on the Religion of Ancient Assyria and Babylonia," pp. 44 sqq.)

(See Renan, "Le Cantique des Cantiques," and Cheyne, "Job and Solomon.")

(9) That the "Book of Daniel" is a romance* written at the time of the Maccabæan rising, probably in B.C. 164. (See Cheyne, "Origin of the Psalter," pp. 94, 105 sqq.)

(10) That Hebrew prophecy is choric poetry elaborately prepared, and strongly marked by explosive, Semetic enthusiasm for all that affects tribal or national well-being. (See D. H. Müller, "Die Propheten in ihrer ursprünglichen Form"; Dieterici, "Philosophie der Araber," I., 16-23; Robertson Smith, "Prophets of Israel," pp. 219 sqq.; Wellhausen, "Prolegomena," pp. 411 sqq. (3d ed.); "Skizzen u. Vorarbeiten," III., pp. 128 sqq.; Cornill, "Der israel. Prophetismus.")

(11) That prophecy always has reference to current events, and never to any far-distant future, and that the blessings it foretells are confined to the present world.† (See references to No. 10.)

(12) That *The* Messiah is a figure entirely unknown to the Old Testament, whereas messiah, as an appellative, meaning "anointed one," is applied to various subjects, to David and his successors, to Cyrus the Persian, to the Jewish high priest, to the "Servant of Yahweh," and to Israel, as a whole. (See Robertson Smith, "Prophets of Israel," pp. 302 sqq.; Cheyne, "Origin of the Psalter," pp. 338 sqq.; "Introduction to the Book of Isaiah," pp. 304-309.)

These few results, which might be added-to indefinitely, will suffice to show what a change has been wrought by the "Higher Criticism" in the current views regarding the Bible, its mode of composition, its authority, the history of the He-

* I am surprised that any one can read the account of Daniel in the book which bears his name, and in Josephus, who uses other documents, without being struck with the fact that he and Zoroaster are one and the same person. The author evidently wished to claim a Hebrew origin for Zoroastrianism (as did the author of Matthew, ii. 1-12), and there are reasons for believing that he was right.

† There is no clear allusion to immortality in the Old Testament, till we come to the "Book of Daniel," written under Zoroastrian, and perhaps Greek, influences. (See Lessing, "Education of the Human Race;" Cheyne, "Orig. of the Psalter," pp. 381 sqq.)

brews, the nature and scope of prophecy, and its relation to *the* Messiah. It is now no longer possible to look upon the Jews as, in any special sense, a chosen people, and as depositaries of a special revelation, or to maintain that the prophets prophesied of Christ. Whoever finds Christ in the Old Testament must first have read him in to it, as many will do for a long time to come.

The critical results thus far obtained for the New Testament are less definite and final than those obtained for the Old, and, indeed, there is evident, among some of the higher critics, a tendency to pat themselves on the back for their courage in dealing with the latter, and on that ground to hold themselves excused from laying hands on the former. Just in proportion as the support of prophecy is withdrawn from the messianic claims of Jesus, do these men increase the awesome solemnity of their tones in speaking of his divinity and redemptive work. They thus—involuntarily, no doubt—help to create the soothing impression that, when the "Higher Criticism" has done its worst for the Old Testament, the fundamental beliefs of Christianity will remain intact, nay, perhaps, be even more impregnable than before. But how vain this flattering unction is must be evident to any one who knows the relation of the New Testament to the Old, and how completely Jesus' messianic and divine claims are based upon the former. The demon of criticism, once evoked, can by no conjuring be prevented from doing for the New Testament what it has done for the Old; and the dread of this is causing no small apprehension in certain quarters. However little sympathy one may feel with the spirit of Professor Sayce's recent attack upon the higher critics, one cannot but admit the extreme pertinence of his question, how their views "can be reconciled with the deity of Christ." *

(III.) The task still remaining for the "Higher Criticism" is to apply its principles and methods to the New Testament, and present its final results in the "Polychrome Bible." Although such results have not yet been reached in matters of detail, the

* Contemporary Review, November, 1896.

work has advanced far enough to show their general outline, and the more important of them may be stated with confidence. It is now clear,—

(1) That the New Testament is a compilation gradually formed, partly from older documents, during the second, third, and fourth centuries; that its contents were different at different times; that its component treatises underwent frequent, numerous, and important changes at the hands of harmonizers; and that it did not assume its present form until near A.D. 400, some additions, such as the story of the adulteress (John vii. 53; viii. 11), being made even after that.* (See Harnack, "Dogmengesch.," I., 304-328; "Chronol. der altchrist. Litt.," Jülicher, "Einleitung in das Neue Testament," pp. 273-357; Westcott and Hort, "New Testament in the Original Greek," pp. 113, 241; Tregelles, "Canon Muratorianus.")

(2) That we have no account of the doings of Jesus from an eye-witness, none of our gospels, even in their earliest form, being of earlier date than 70 A.D., and none of them having claimed apostolic authorship until some way into the second century. (See Harnack, "Dogmengesch.," I., 311, n. 2; "Das Neue Testament um das Jahr 200".)

(3) That, generally speaking, the books of the New Testament, with the exception of certain epistles of Paul and, in their original form, the synoptic gospels and the Acts, were not written by the men whose names they bear, these names having been given to them, as a mark of apostolicity, at the time when the church was trying to compile an authoritative canon, in order to give unity and stability to herself and her teachings, as against the innovations of gnostics and new prophets,—Montanists and others. Of course, as long as the Christians expected the almost immediate return of Jesus (see Matthew xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27; 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17; 2 Thessalonians ii. 1-12), they could have no object in writing down accounts of his former life. It was only when,

* Of the nature and extent of the changes made in the New Testament even in the fourth century, a striking illustration is furnished by the recently discovered Syriac translation of the Gospels.

after the death of the apostles, this hope vanished, and they had to assume a new attitude to life, that they did so.

(4) That Paul, the earliest Christian writer, knows nothing of the miracles of Jesus, accepting even that of the resurrection* only because it is "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4; cf. Weizsäcker, "Das apostol. Zeitalter," pp. 109 sqq.).

(5) That the "Acts of the Apostles" was written to bridge the gulf between the synoptical gospels and the rabbinical Christianity of Paul's epistles, and to legitimize his claim to apostleship; and that its account of him is in many respects incompatible with what he relates of himself. (See Harnack, "Dogmengesch.," i., p. 312, n. 1; Weizsäcker, "Das Ap. Zeitalt.," pp. 57-70, 199-212; Jülicher, "Einleit. in das N. T.," pp. 259-272.)

(6) That the gospel of John is a philosophic romance, composed under Greek mystic influences about A.D. 100. (See Weizsäcker, *al sup.*, pp. 514 sqq.; Jülicher, "Einleitung," pp. 238; Harnack, "Chronologie," pp. 656 sqq.)

(7) That, before our era, there were current among the Jews several conceptions of the Messiah, chief among which were (1) the old preëxilic one, found in the later prophets, which looked on him as a Davidic king, who would restore the kingdom of David, and make the just triumph; (2) the apocalyptic one, found in the later Palestinian apocalypses, which made him a heavenly being, existing from all eternity, who would establish a universal empire of eternal peace, with Jerusalem as its capital, and the Jews as governors.† (See Westcott,

* Resurrection must not be confounded with existence after death. The former, a Jewish notion, first met with in Daniel (xii. 2; cf. Charles, "Book of Enoch," pp. 51, 139, note), was repellent to all Greek thinking. (See Acts xvii. 32, and cf. Chiappelli, "*La Dottrina della Carne nei primi Secoli della Chiesa*," Naples, 1894.) That Paul believed he had seen the risen Christ—not, of course, in his natural body! (see 1 Cor. xv. 44)—is clear. As to the meaning of this, see Weizsäcker, *ut sup.*, pp. 6-17. As to the entire unhistoricity of the resurrection-legend, see Brandt, "Die evang. Gesch. u. der Ursprung des Christenth. auf Grund einer Kritik der Berichte üb. die Leiden u. die Auferstehung Jesu," Leipzig, 1893.

† The latter conception, like other apocalyptic ones,—angels, resurrection, judgment, etc.,—was probably derived from Mazdeism, which expects a Divine

"Intro. to the Study of the Gospels," pp. 110-173; Schürer, "Hist. of the Jewish Peop. in the Time of Jesus Christ," II., ii., pp. 126-187.)

(8) That Jesus, combining these two conceptions through a third, whose elements he found in the "Servant-of-Yahweh" passages in Isaiah, especially chap. liii., and in Psalm cx., worked out a conception of the Messiah, according to which, claiming to be a son of David, he would attempt to establish an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem, be baffled, led, as a lamb, to the slaughter, make his soul an offering for sin, make his grave with the wicked, and with the rich, sit down at the right hand of God, and thereafter return, with divine glory and power, to establish an eternal messianic kingdom.*

(9) That the picture of Jesus presented in the gospels is very largely composed of traits derived from prophecy, misinterpreted in a messianic sense by scribes and rabbis.† (See Strauss, "Life of Jesus.")

(10) That, while the Palestinian Jews looked for salvation through a Messiah, the "Dispersion" rather looked for it from a personified "Wisdom" or "Word," often mentioned in the "Wisdom-Literature," and conceived as the eternal assessor and helper of God; and that, in the gospel of John, Jesus is identified with a somewhat Hellenized form of this,—hence the Logos doctrine, which made Christ's claims intelligible to the Greeks, and dogmatic theology possible.‡

(11) That Jesus, in his recorded sayings, makes no reference to "the Fall," which seems to have been introduced into

Messiah. See Cheyne, "Orig. of Psalter," pp. 400, 438 n. ff; Zend Avesta, *passim*.

* This is the only programme that adequately accounts for the conduct of Jesus, and nothing is more wonderful than the single-mindedness and heroism with which he carried it out. One readily understands why he lays such stress in faith.

† For the messianic prophecies in the New Testament, see Westcott, "Introduction to the Study of the New Testament," pp. 169-173.

‡ There is no mention of the Messiah in the Apocrypha or in the works of Philo, both belonging to the "Dispersion," whereas "Wisdom" and "the Word" are well known. For "Wisdom" see Proverbs viii. 22 sqq., Job xxviii. 12 sqq. On the relation of "Wisdom" to "the Word," see Drummond, "Philo Judæus," ii. 201 sqq.

Christian thought by Paul, whose demonology was very elaborate. (See Everling, "Die paulinische Angelologie u. Dæmonologie.")

(12) That the historic Jesus, whose mental history is, on the whole, clear, made no claim to deity, and refused to work miracles (Matthew xix. 17, xii. 38-40, xvi. 4), the later attribution of which to him is fully accounted for by the conditions under which the gospels were written.

(13) That the rise and spread of Christianity can be satisfactorily explained without recourse to any agencies other than those at work in the ordinary course of history.

(IV.) It is obvious, from what has been said, that one chief result of the "Higher Criticism" will be to eliminate the miraculous, the supernatural, the wilfully inscrutable, from human history as well as from nature, and to discredit, as superstition, anything that pretends to be a divine revelation not explicable by their laws. It will thus contribute to hasten the final triumph of pure science, whose successive victories over theology have recently been so admirably rehearsed in Dr. Andrew White's "History of the Warfare of Science with Theology." And this triumph means that, in dealing with man and nature, we shall cease assuming that we have any privileged information regarding the nature or ulterior purposes of the supernatural author of these, and shall realize that the principles governing the world can be reached only through rational induction from the sum of human experience,—that is, through science. Abandoning the attempt to explain the world of experience by a foregone conception of its first principle, we shall try to discover what sort of first or universal principle experience, at any moment, justifies us in assuming, at the same time recognizing that our conception of that principle will change with the widening experience to account for which it is assumed. It will then be clearly seen that the God of "revealed" theology is only a naïve, unconscious induction from an exceedingly crude, narrow, and unsystematized experience, such as existed before the rise of modern science, and that the contradictions and mysteries found by later thought in his nature are all due to this fact. Instead of regretting the

obsolescence of this God, every rational human being will rejoice to find him replaced by a God who, being the very principle of explanation of all that is known, must be the most scrutable and intelligible of beings, no matter whether he prove impersonal, superpersonal, personal, or multipersonal.

(V.) And so the purified faith of the future will be one which, eschewing the supernatural and the miraculously revealed, takes its stand on science,—science of nature and of that for which nature is,—viz., spirit. To those who have been wont to find comfort in an attitude of indolent adoration and blind trust toward a mysterious unknown, this will, and must, seem a cheerless outlook; for persons of inactive mind find more satisfaction in the boundless void of mystery, and the unchallenging hopelessness of contradictions presented as facts, than in the clear definiteness of the most assured truth. Such will feel that, bereft of supernatural revelation, they are thrown back into the waste, howling wilderness of paganism, which seems very terrible. But surely it is not so sad a thing to be in the position of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epictetus, and those other earnest, humble truth-seekers, who fearlessly sought to penetrate the riddle of existence, and to lead worthy lives,—lives that shame those of most believers in revelation. And, after all, we are in a much better position for solving the enigma than they were. Between them and us lie two thousand years of human experience, richer than any they knew, two thousand years of philosophic thought and sharpening of the faculties of intelligence, and two thousand years of education of the moral sense. Much that was impossible for them, with all their labor, may be, and certainly is, possible for us. Indeed, it is only a distrust, fostered by sycophantic supernaturalism, of “mere human reason,” as a guide to life, that prevents us from reaching, by its means, a far deeper insight into the truths that give life its meaning, than any that revelation ever offered. That existence is moral to the core, and that every spirit is infinite, eternal, and, therefore, also free,—free through knowledge, righteous love, and beneficent will, to work out an eternally increasing blessedness for itself and others,—are truths which the best thought of the present day

is capable of placing beyond any doubt. And what more can we ask for? Shall we weep and mourn because there is no unjust omnipotence to snatch us from our cowardly intellectual and moral sloth, and place us in an equally cowardly heaven of eternal, useless dalliance? Virtue will not do so!

"She desires no isles of the Blest, no quiet seats of the Just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky.
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die."

And such wages she certainly will have in a moral world.

But the purified creed has many advantages, besides certainty, over the old supernatural one. A few of these may be enumerated:—

(1) It can retain, in ennobled form, all that was valuable in the old creed, even the doctrine of the incarnation, now extended to all men, and the sublime figure of Jesus, now made available as an inspiring example, by being placed on the human level. Not what he did, but the spirit in which he did it, will be eternal.

(2) It can be taught in our schools, as a basis for ethical life, which demands virtue, not for the sake of some slothful satisfaction beyond itself, but as the one eternally desirable thing in the universe. In this relation it will do away with that numbing doubt and that frivolizing aimlessness which mar so much of the life of the present.

(3) For its intelligent acceptance, it will demand the exercise of our highest intellectual faculties, which, atrophied by disuse, or corrupted through perversion, under supernaturalism, have left the lower faculties of sense, self-interest, passion, and greed to run riot.

(4) It will form an ethical and religious foundation upon which all men can meet and, in the end, agree, thus putting an end to the unbrothering hatreds and internecine horrors that mark the relations of hostile supernatural creeds, incapable of reconciliation.

(5) It will blot out the cruel line now separating religious from "merely moral" life, and make duty the one, universal religious rite.

(6) It will be capable of endless development, growing with the growth of science, and strengthening as life becomes more moral and refined.

These advantages,—and they might easily be added-to,—while they will deprive us of the privilege of being lazy, thoughtless, and superstitious, suggest an outlook which ought to make us welcome the results of the “Higher Criticism,” not merely without suspicion or dread, but with the utmost confidence and enthusiasm, as the conditions of a new era in human history.

THOMAS DAVIDSON.

NEW YORK.

THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.*

I SUPPOSE most of you remember a sarcastic utterance of the present Prime Minister with respect to what his great political opponent described as the Concert of Europe. Lord Salisbury said that it was unfortunately an assemblage in which every performer was playing a different tune. In political matters I am afraid that there is still too much truth in this somewhat cynical epigram. But, fortunately for humanity, politics do not cover the whole field of civilized life. Outside of politics there is on many points such a thing as the Concert of Europe. The Concert of Europe, as I will interpret the term, means a consensus of international opinion in a given direction or on a certain definite subject. Such a consensus of civilized opinion must always carry immense weight. An expression of national opinion may be biased and vitiated by national prejudice, or national circumstances, or national idiosyncrasy. But, when an opinion becomes international, when it becomes the common conviction of the vast majority of civilized mankind, then it comes home to us with overwhelming force and power. Now, if you consult the opinion of almost all the most experienced writers, jurists, administrators, and statesmen among European communities,

* An address delivered at St. Martin's Hall, London, 1897.